

CAMAE

Connecticut Association of Municipal Agents for the Elderly

Raised Bill No. 235

An act concerning Municipal Agents for the Elderly

As members of the Executive Board of CAMAE (Connecticut Association of Municipal Agents for the Elderly) we would like to express our strong opposition to this proposed legislation which will effectively weaken the role of Municipal Agents for the Elderly in our communities, and create a critical gap in services for seniors and their families at the local level.

Over the course of the past year, we met with representatives of DSS's Aging Services Division and told them our concerns about the effectiveness of the current statute, as well as the state's difficulty to provide adequate training to Municipal Agents, or compile and disseminate a report of our outcomes based on the data which we are annually required to submit to DSS.

We have also held discussions internally and with DSS staff, regarding the crucial need for all communities to have adequate and uniform systems in place that will provide information and referrals on aging related matters at the local level, and discussed whether this should be continued through an improved Municipal Agent system or a viable alternative.

As we are all aware, Connecticut is one of the fastest aging states in the country, with a baby boomer population that is expected to grow exponentially in the coming decades. The state's role in ensuring that adequate systems are in place on a local community level, to provide aging related information should be of paramount concern.

We were not directly consulted on this proposed legislation, and strongly recommend that you do not support it. Instead, we encourage you to direct the DSS Division on Aging Services to reach out to our organization and other elderly services groups, so that we can work together to collectively devise a system that meets Connecticut's elderly population's future information and referral needs, and ensures that an accessible safety net is in place at the local level for all seniors.

Sincerely,

Judy Jencks, President, Senior Center Director, Lisbon

Kathleen Doherty-Peck, Vice-President, Director of Senior and Social Services, Montville

Patti White, Secretary, Director of Senior Services, Colchester

Fran Minor, Treasurer, Senior Center Director, Preston